

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



*Cora Campbell, Commissioner
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GOLOVNIN BAY & ELIM SUBDISTRICTS COMMERCIAL SALMON OPENINGS

Norton Sound Subdistrict 3, the Elim Subdistrict, will reopen to commercial salmon fishing for one 24-hour period from 6:00 p.m. Sunday, August 12 to 6:00 p.m. Monday, August 13. Norton Sound Subdistrict 2, the Golovnin Bay Subdistrict will reopen to commercial salmon fishing for one 36-hour period from 8:00 a.m. Tuesday, August 14 to 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 15. Permit holders in both subdistricts are limited to 100 fathoms of gillnets and mesh size is restricted to 6 inches or less.

Escapements of silver salmon into the Kwiniuk River and Niukluk River as indexed by tower counts have been lagging thus far this season. Yesterday, aerial surveys were flown of Niukluk River to ground truth tower count estimates in light of recent high water events and monitor inriver abundance of silver salmon in the lower reaches of the Tubutulik and Kwiniuk Rivers. The Tubutulik River east of Elim, is the other major salmon producing drainage in the Elim Subdistrict. A total of 970 silvers were observed on the Niukluk River from the confluence of the Casadepaga River downstream to the confluence with the Fish River. These aerial observations are somewhat consistent with Niukluk River tower counts considering that salmon passage was not enumerated for 7 days due to high water levels from July 30 to August 5. Silver salmon passage estimates during the high water period have now been calculated for the July 30 to August 2 counts. Projected escapement of silver salmon to the Niukluk River based on the adjusted tower count estimate of 659 silvers and normal run-timing models now sits at 3,200 silver salmon. While below average, this projection is above the lower end of the tower-based SEG range of 2,400-7,200 silvers. While a record low 500 silvers has been counted at the Kwiniuk River tower, normal run-timing models also result in a projected escapement of 1,700 silvers which indicates that the aerial survey SEG range of 650-1,300 silvers will be achieved. Over 2,900 silvers were counted at the neighboring Tubutulik River from the mouth to Clear Creek, which was high for a partial survey conducted this early in the season.

These index openings will provide an index of mid-season silver salmon run strength and provide limited commercial harvest opportunity. Subsistence users have spent the last two weeks targeting silver salmon during the hiatus in commercial fishing activity. Subsistence needs should therefore not be jeopardized by these brief mid-season openings. Escapements of silver salmon and commercial catch rates from these index openings will be evaluated before allowing additional commercial opportunity. Good Luck and Good Fishing.